

CHAPTER 7. ROTORCRAFT AUTHORIZATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

SECTION 1. IFR OFFSHORE OPERATIONS

1533. INTRODUCTION. This chapter contains direction and guidance to be used by principal operations inspectors (POI's) concerning rotorcraft authorizations and limitations. Section 1 contains direction and guidance to POI's for reviewing and approving helicopter IFR offshore operations outside controlled airspace. Section 2 contains direction and guidance to be used by POI's for reviewing and approving helicopter en route descent areas (HEDA's). Section 3 contains direction and guidance to be used by POI's for reviewing and approving airborne radar approach (ARA) procedures and offshore standard approach procedures (OSAP's).

1535. GENERAL. IFR operations in any controlled airspace, including offshore, are granted to the operator by paragraph B32 in the operations specifications (OpSpecs). IFR operations in uncontrolled airspace are authorized by paragraph A14. POI's should utilize FAA Order 8400.10, volume 4, chapter 1, section 2 for guidance concerning operators desiring to conduct IFR offshore operations in uncontrolled airspace.

1537. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR HELICOPTER IFR OFFSHORE OPERATIONS. Any operator that desires to conduct IFR operations in uncontrolled airspace shall adhere to the following guidelines:

A. Submission of Proposal. The operator shall submit, to its certificate-holding district office (CHDO), a letter that describes the proposed operation. The operator's letter should include the following items:

- Specific routes to be flown
- The exact location of the destination
- The proposed type of aircraft
- The navigation equipment on the aircraft

- Specific navigation aids to be used at the offshore facility, if any

B. Coordination. After reviewing the request, the CHDO will arrange a coordination meeting with air traffic elements that will be involved (center, approach control, FSS, etc.). If a navigation aid (NAVAID) exists at the offshore facility, the regional flight procedures branch should also be represented at the coordination meeting.

1539. SPECIFIC OPERATOR REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES. Any operator that wishes to be approved for IFR offshore operations must ensure that the following navigation and facility requirements are met:

A. Route Requirements. Operators may develop these proposed and specified routes by Class I station-reference navigation where adequate signal coverage is available. Outside of the area where signal coverage is available, the operator must provide a suitable means of Class II navigation. By means of validation tests in VFR conditions, POI's shall ensure that the operator is able to demonstrate adequate navigational performance for these routes before being granted approval to use them.

B. Terminal Procedures. One of the two following procedures will be followed for approving terminal-area IFR operations:

(1) *Procedures Based Upon a Class I NAVAID.* The regional flight procedures branch is responsible for the review of the operator's proposed procedures. Appropriate approach plates and operating procedures must be approved by the FAA and then be published in the operator's manual. The POI grants the authorization by creating a non-standard OpSpecs paragraph which refers to the section of the operator's manual containing these procedures.

(2) *Procedures Used When No Terminal NAVAID Facility Exists.* In these cases, the operator must submit a

written request to the CHDO for a helicopter offshore procedure according to Advisory Circular (AC) 90-80, "Approval of Offshore Helicopter Approaches."

C. *HEDA's*. At the operator's request, the POI will coordinate with the regional flight inspection and procedures branch to establish a HEDA. See section 2 of this chapter for more information.

D. *Weather-Reporting Requirements*. A weather-reporting facility, approved by the National Weather Service (NWS) or FAA, must be present and operable within 10 nautical miles of the destination. A remote source may be approved by the POI (based on the concurrence of the NWS) as a deviation from the provisions of FAR 135.213(b) when the operator can demonstrate an ade-

quate level of safety for the proposed operation. The POI will publish approval for such deviation in the OpSpecs (paragraph H112).

1541. GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATION. When operations are to be conducted in a region other than that of the CHDO, the CHDO is responsible for coordinating, through its regional headquarters, with the FSDO having jurisdiction of the geographic area in which operations are to be conducted. The office having geographic responsibility will normally perform route checks and other required inspections and forward reports of these inspections to the POI. When all requirements have been met, the POI will authorize the operator to conduct operations by means of a non-standard OpSpecs paragraph.

1542. - 1552. RESERVED.

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